

Serial No. 09/666,054
Amendment dated **May 4, 2006**
Reply to Final Office Action of March 8, 2006

Docket No. HI-017

REMARKS

Claims 1-5, 7-12, 14, 15, 17, 19, 20, 22-27, 29, 31-33, 39, 40, 42, and 43 are pending. Claims 1-5, 7-12, 14, 15, 17, 19, 20, and 22-25 have been allowed, claims 26 and 39 has been amended, and claims 6, 13, 16, 18, 21, 28, 30, 34-38, and 41 have been canceled. In addition, the Abstract has been amended to remove the legal phrase “means” and Applicants have used the status identifier “Previously Presented” in connection with claim 43 in this paper, noting that the proper identifier should have been “New” in the paper previously filed. Applicants further submit that the amendments presented in this paper raise no new issues requiring further searching or consideration by the Examiner.

Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested for the following reasons.

In the Office Action, claim 43 was rejected under 35 USC § 112, second paragraph, for being vague with respect to which ports are on which boards. Claim 43 has been amended to clarify that “the master board includes a first port to inform the slave board of whether the master board is in the active state or standby state, a second port to receive information from the slave board indicating whether the slave board is in the active or standby state, a third port to output a reset signal to the slave board; and a fourth port to receive a reset signal from the slave board for resetting the master board.” (See, for example, Figure 3 for support along with corresponding portions of the specification.)

It is respectfully submitted that the foregoing amendments and remarks are sufficient to overcome the § 112, second paragraph, rejection of claim 43. With this rejection removed, Applicants submit that claim 43 is in condition for allowance.

Claims 26, 27, 29, and 31-33 were rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) for being obvious in view of a Uriu-Matsurama combination. Applicants traverse this rejection for the following reasons.

Claim 26 has been amended to recite that “the signal lines connecting the ports on the master board and slave board bypass a bus carrying ATM cell data for the boards.” Matsurama does not teach or suggest these features. See Figure 1 and corresponding portions of the Matsurama specification which disclose that the connections between switching control units 21 and 31 are only used to transport low-priority cells between active and standby systems, not the type of state information recited in claim 26 – namely “state information [which] indicates a virtual path and a virtual channel for determining an active state and a standby state of the slave board and the master board.”

Applicants respectfully submit that these differences are sufficient to render claim 26 and its dependent claims allowable over the cited combination.

Claims 39, 40, and 42 were rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) for being obvious in view of a Uriu-Blanc combination. Applicants traverse this rejection for the following reasons.

The Blanc patent discloses transmitting control signals and watchdog information through buses 50i, 60, and 40j coupled between left and right side switch fabrics. The Blanc

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patent further discloses that the switch fabrics each receive cells through corresponding port adapters. However, the Blanc patent does not teach or suggest transmitting state information through a “pin-to-pin connection bypassing a bus which is coupled to the master and slave boards for carrying ATM cell information,” where the state information “indicates a virtual path and a virtual channel for determining an active state and a standby state of the slave board and the master board” as recited in claim 39.

Applicants respectfully submit that these differences are sufficient to render claim 39 and its dependent claims allowable over the cited combination.

Claim 43 was rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) for being obvious in view of a Uriu-Matsumura-Blanc-Dempsey combination. Applicants traverse this rejection on grounds that the Dempsey patent fails to teach or suggest the features of base claim 26 missing from the Uriu and Blanc patents.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

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To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this, concurrent and future replies, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 16-0607 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,
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